

The Nematode PROBLEM

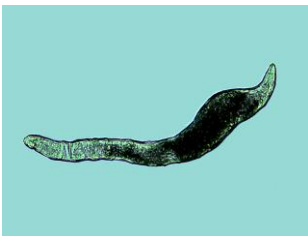


Plant-parasitic nematodes are microscopic roundworms that cause a variety of plant diseases, usually by invading the plant roots. Their effects include: increased heat and drought stress, reduced crop yields, and even plant death.



Nematodes are difficult to control with common pesticides and most products currently marketed for nematode control have significant safety and effectiveness problems.

About Nematodes



- Nematodes are the most numerous multicellular animals on earth.
- There are nearly 20,000 identified species in the phylum Nemata.
- A handful of soil typically contains thousands of these microscopic worms.
- Most nematodes feed on bacteria, fungi, and other soil organisms. Others are parasitic, obtaining their food from animals (such as the dog heartworm), humans (such as the pinworm), and plants.
- There are many different types of plant-parasitic nematodes, but only about 10 different genera cause most of the problems in agriculture and horticulture. Each type of nematode generally prefers to attack specific plants.



How Nematodes Attack Plants

Plant-parasitic nematodes generally attack the root system. Nematodes feeding on roots reduce the flow of water and nutrients into the plant, and thus reduce the yield of agricultural crops. In addition, nematode infestations weaken plants, making them more susceptible to other stress factors such as heat, water, and nutritional deficiencies, and to other disease-causing organisms.